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THE LITERATURE TODAY MAGAZINE

Explore a journey through words, where stories unfold like magic. The essence of literature is captured on every page. 'The Literature Today Magazine' - Your portal to a world of literary wonders. Immerse yourself in the artistry of words, today and always.

Sanjeev
Thomas



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FROM THE
Editor-in-chief

When we began with **The Literature Today**, we were not sure about where the journey with our brainchild would take us. With every edition, we learned, grew, expanded the corners of our magazine, and educated ourselves simultaneously. The Quarterly E-Magazine has helped us redefine the meaning and significance of media and bridge the gap between the world of words and quickly evolving technology. **Volume 4 of the first Issue Edition** of The Literature Today Magazine has helped us expand our dimensions a little more with a bunch of topics that we have explored.

The latest edition features much more than just books and attempts to reach out to more readers this time. The magazine includes book reviews and author interviews, featuring articles on a wide variety of topics like technology, lifestyle, fashion, and all that is revolutionary and influential in people's lives. It also includes content that is relevant to the present scenario under the heading of current topics. In addition, some surprise entries can be read once the readers lay their hands on this edition.

With every edition, we strive to achieve new heights and improve the next edition, as we believe there is always more to add and to learn. Hence, we would heartily welcome valuable suggestions from our readers at theliteraturetoday@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you. Happy Reading!



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Best Regards,

M. M. Solanki

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

01 AUTHOR STORY ARTICLE - SANJEEV PANACKAL THOMAS

02 AUTHOR INTERVIEW

- ❖ SANJEEV PANACKAL THOMAS
- ❖ NEETIKA MODI
- ❖ AIR ATMAN IN RAVI
- ❖ RAVINDRA GARIMELLA
- ❖ RITU BARKI
- ❖ TANMAY SHARMA



03 BOOK REVIEW

- ❖ FEARFUL PLEASURE BY P.A. CHAWLA
- ❖ TOSHALI ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY 2024
- ❖ KARACHI TO MALABAR: AN ODYSSEY OF LOVE BY SANJEEV PANACKAL THOMAS
- ❖ "AAINA" BY RITU BARKI
- ❖ AI.GOV BY RAJEEV NANDA
- ❖ PARLIAMENT OF INDIA: DIVERSE DIMENSIONS BY RAVINDRA GARIMELLA
- ❖ THE CELESTIAL HUNT BY DEVIKUMAR RAMALINGAM

04 MEDIA COVERAGE

- ❖ DR. HANSAJI YOGENDRA, A YOGA MASTER, INTRODUCES HIS BOOK "THE SATTVIK KITCHEN" WITH SHILPA SHETTY
- ❖ THE BOOK LAUNCH OF LAKSHMI PURI'S "EPIC" WAS QUITE IMPRESSIVE. POETRY WAS BROUGHT TO LIFE BY KABIR BEDI
- ❖ FIRST-EVER NATIONAL CREATORS AWARDS IN 20 CATEGORIES ARE PRESENTED BY PM MODI.
- ❖ WILL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (GENAI) BE A THREAT OR AN OPPORTUNITY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION?

05 POEMS

- ❖ YASHVANT SINGH
- ❖ DR. MAYURKUMAR MUKUNDBHAI SOLANKI
- ❖ DR. AJAY NARAYANAN

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Sanjeev Panackal Thomas

Sanjeev Panackal Thomas (SPT in short) won a Government of India merit scholarship to study at Lawrence School, Lovedale, known as the Eaton of Asia. It was far beyond what his parents could have afforded for an admission there, but the scholar in him did it.

If
We do

Sanjeev was an athlete of repute, a sprinter doing commendably well. The Motto of the school, still reverberates in his thoughts, an approach to life called, “Never Give In”. He was the Head Boy.

He went to complete his Mechanical Engineering from the University of Kerala and MBA from the School of Management Studies, CUSAT. He then did Executive MBA while working at the corporate. As a potential leadership candidate, he has received CEO Coaching from Switzerland.





In a career spanning 25 years, Sanjeev has served on the boards of companies in India, Europe and the US. He was the owner representative of companies in Belgium, Norway and the US. He has turned an entrepreneur building companies in India and the UAE which are in incubation. Believing in the concept of 'giveback to society' he has coached students to craft vision statement for life and provide a path to its achievement - A Life Coach. He has been guest speaker at Management Schools sharing his experience and as a thought leader, the need to be brutally honest in business. Championing the cause of 'Say No to Corruption' Sanjeev envisages creation of an honest society in the premises that he operates in. He was the Chairman of CII, Trivandrum, Kerala.



Sanjeev took to serious writing in the midst of his entrepreneurial venture, with things moving at a pace far below his intent and expectation. KARACHI TO MALABAR an odyssey of love was born thus. The book is the winner of Golden Book award 2024.

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS

- **SANJEEV PANACKAL THOMAS**
- **NEETIKA MODI**
- **AIR ATMAN IN RAVI**
- **RAVINDRA GARIMELLA**
- **RITU BARKI**
- **TANMAY SHARMA**

An exclusive interview with Sanjeev Panackal Thomas.



Questionnaires:

TLT: What inspired you to write this book? What was the impetus behind this work of yours?

Sanjeev Thomas: Distinguished civil servant and author Dr Babu Paul was a good friend of my father. Over a cup of coffee, he asked me whether my father had penned his rich experiences for the next generation to know. He did start, but could not bring it to a decipherable form. Once he left, I thought why take to writing myself? Not his life, but a fiction that will have a tinge of his life. That way, it's mini autobiographical, stringing together the stories I have heard from my parents and my grandparents, still etched in me. I knew that my father had had a short stint in Karachi, the undivided India, where he had gone to visit his elder brother who was serving in the army. Piecing together, after due research, I thought "What if he had met a girl there, the handsome, eloquent, charming boy who cycled around Karachi discovering it; would they have had a thunderbolt moment?"

All fantasies! And that's how the seeds of KTM#anodysseyoflove were sowed. 7 years, that's the time it took to bring it to fruition. The way you see it today.

TLT: You've given a very simple and composed title to your book, which gives a hint to the readers about the story in the book. What was the reason to keep it simple?

Sanjeev Thomas: Title of a book should draw you to explore it. It should retain the element of inquisitiveness to know more. It should give a sense of the ethos of the story. KARACHI to MALABAR, an Odyssey of Love; The title conveys, it is a love story, better put, a love saga with its deep desires, angst, and hope portrayed deeply.

TLT: Firstly, Congratulations on your book, "Karachi to Malabar" Well, can you please share your experience about making your work come into the form of a book?

Sanjeev Thomas: Thank you. The experience of creating KTM#anodysseyoflove has been, in the simplest of terms an exhilarating journey. And in real terms, it's the work of a lifetime. It was a calling! Not in my wildest dreams had I thought I would turn into a writer. I have always been enamored by the eloquence of gifted writers. They create paintings, using words as colors to create a beautiful tapestry in all hues in a story. They are the born writers, who could take to penning stories like duck takes to water.

I was not one at all of that genre. Words just failed me. But, the adoration for writers grew in me to an obsession; to be among them. It's said passion can turn a tiny spec into a shining star. All you need is self-belief and perseverance. That's how the author in me was born.

It's the story of ZOHAL the Pashtun mountain girl who searches for her lover Michael, a boy from Travancore, who had to leave all of a sudden, without even having a chance to say goodbye. The core of the book is Zohal's search for her lover, her daughter's father. Spanning three generations across continents, the story weaves the sanguine magic of LOVE!

I always say, "This book is for those who still have residual love and romance within them" It will have an element of self for each reader through one or many of the characters etched. Interestingly, it's a romantic saga that you can start reading from any chapter. The flow still would remain seamless. The only caution is not to start with the last chapter as it would take away the element of excited expectation of 'the lover's meet'.

TLT: What was your mindset, while working on this book? Is it based on any particular experience of yours?

Sanjeev Thomas: As I said earlier, I was building on the stories that I had heard from my parents and grandfather. It has an element of me in one of the characters. No story intense can be made without personal experiences and events that strike a cord with you. Therefore yes, it's a whiff of breeze that cascades the experiences in life mingled with its fantasies.

Stories are never plucked out of thin air and written, however brilliant a writer you are. The novels of most accomplished authors, if you look at it, it's only a few that stand out. Then there is one which is ecstatic that touched his life the most., written from the depth of her throbbing heart. A calling, as I have experienced with my book, KARCHI TO MALABAR An Odyssey of Love.

TLT: What are some of the learnings that you gained from writing this book of yours?

Sanjeev Thomas: One realization was that each one of us has a writer within us. Do we strive to search and find or brush it away saying 'no way I can write', is the question we need to ask ourselves. Writing is not about flowery language. It's about the expression of one's thoughts, feelings, and the deepest of desires and dreams, in own words. The intent is important. Words will follow. But it's always desirable to have more and more words in your armory. The subtle differences in the choice of words can make the work magical. It helps you to transform the reader's journey in real-time. Each word, each sentence tracing an event elucidated in all its vividness.

I invested in my vocabulary a second time after school, in my fifties. I penned a book on mastering vocabulary through roots. Well, that was a gift I gave to myself, that enabled bringing forth this love saga, to you!

TLT: Next, I would want you to tell us about some of those writers, who had inspired you and whom you follow!

Sanjeev Thomas: Well, a tough question to answer as some of them may not be well known to all. For the well-known authors, Tagore still amazes me. The story just flows. The moment you start, it's a movie being played to you. As far as poetry is concerned, none can match Neruda, Pablo Neruda. He gave a whole new experience to poetry. The theme of writing in rhymes was given a pass. The poem flowed from the heart. His poems had the love, desire, and lust that embodied human life. The realm of magical realism was brought to me by two authors. The Nobel laureate, Marcus, and Malayalam's own O V Vijayan. His book 'The Legends of Khasak', I would rate it among the all-time enthralling literary creations in the world. Unfortunately, the native authors are shoved away with preference for the 'celebrities' of literature. I would urge the lovers of literature to fight for this cause.

TLT: Thank you so much for answering all my questions. All the very best to you for the future and your book too!

Sanjeev Thomas: It's been a pleasure interacting with you. I have had interviews, but such thought-provoking questions have been a Luxury. As you may know, the book has won the Golden Book award constituted by the Wings publication. It's been a rare honour and I thank the Jury. I would also like to thank Notion Press for being my publisher. And finally, a big thank you to all my readers, for without you, the book or the award would have never happened. I hope and wish that the reader community keeps growing. It's your support by way of reading, critiquing, sharing that challenge, and inspiring us to write more. And who knows it could be the birth of a master storyteller of our time. Love and Regards!



About the Author - Neetika Modi's presence at the intersection of dentistry and literature illuminates a unique narrative of creativity and healing. While her credentials as a renowned dentist are impressive, it is her literary endeavors that truly captivate the imagination. Dr. Modi's literary journey sets her apart. Her debut book, "ANTIM: THE LAST AVATAR", weaves a tapestry of Vedic lore, mythical intrigue, and contemporary relevance, captivating readers with its imaginative narrative and profound insights. In her exploration of ancient wisdom and modern dilemmas, Dr. Modi transcends genres, offering readers a glimpse into the depths of the human psyche and the eternal struggle between light and darkness.

An exclusive interview with Neetika Modi.

Questionnaires:

TLT: I would like to begin by congratulating you on the publication of "Antim: The Last Avatar." How has the response to the book been so far?

Neetika Modi: It has been incredible and the book has been appreciated by readers across all age groups.

TLT: What led to the idea of writing "Antim: The Last Avatar"? Were there any events that inspired the work?

Neetika Modi: My inspiration for delving into Hindu Mythology comes from the profound realization that these tales are not just stories of Gods, but reflections of the human experience. Through these, we find a connection to our roots, a link to our past, and a guide to our future.

TLT: How easy or difficult was it for you to decide the placement of events in "Antim: The Last Avatar" and keep it simple to understand for the readers?

Neetika Modi: In the pages of this book, I've tried to evoke the vibrant colors of our diverse culture, the resounding echoes of our epics, and the whispers of ancient sages, who sought to unravel the mysteries of existence. Along with the enchanting world of science fiction and AI. The tone in the book is easy and though we jump across timelines frequently, it is easy for the reader to follow.

TLT: What are your views about present-day writing? Do you think it does complete justice in depicting human nature in the light of “Antim: The Last Avatar”?”

Neetika Modi: The book offers insights into the complexities of life, relationships, and the moral choices we face. Including the enigmatic prophecies that foretell the arrival of KALKI- THE LAST AVATAR

TLT: “Antim: The Last Avatar” shows the uniqueness of your style of writing. Are there any authors that you enjoy reading or any books that are your favorites?

Neetika Modi: Amongst Indian Authors, I find Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s style of narrative very intriguing and resonating. I loved “Palace of Illusions” and “The Kite Runner” by Khaled Hosseini was brilliant too.

TLT: How would you categorize “Antim: The Last Avatar” as its appeal seems to be to a broad audience?

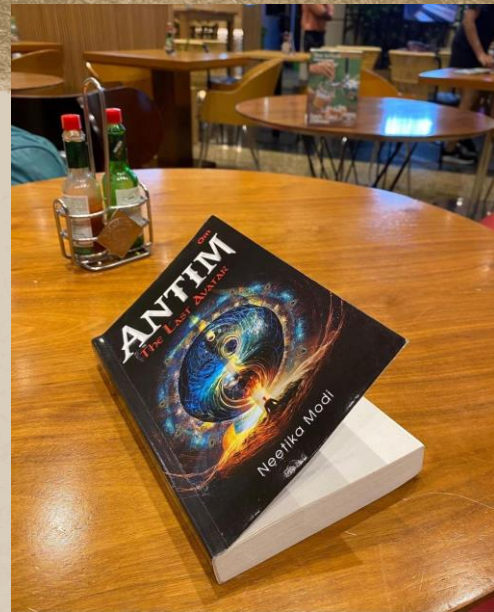
Neetika Modi: Set against the backdrop of the 21st century, the novel weaves a gripping narrative that spans generations and introduces readers to a cast of characters deeply rooted in Indian mythology. Drawing inspiration from the stories of the Eight Chiranjeevi’s, the guardians of the universe. Antim centers around the prophesied birth of Kalki, the tenth and final avatar of Lord Vishnu. As the world grapples with moral decline, Kalki emerges as humanity’s last hope and the battle between good and evil intensifies.

TLT: “Antim: The Last Avatar” has given a powerful introduction to your potential as a writer. Can the readers expect more from you in the future? Please share about your future projects.

Neetika Modi: This is the first part of a Trilogy, so yes 2 more books of Antim and I am writing a book on Holistic Health.

TLT: What is the story behind the title of your work, “Antim: The Last Avatar”?”

Neetika Modi: The prophesied appearance of Kalki is a symbol of hope in the darkest of times, the end of the dark Kali Yug. It is a reminder that even in the depths of chaos & despair, there is a chance for renewal and transformation.



TLT: In the present time, the ideas in “Antim: The Last Avatar” do not find much mention. What, according to you, could be the possible reason for that?

Neetika Modi: The way our world is currently evolving- being overwhelmed by technology- which in itself is a good kind of evolution but there is not a very large space there for reaching out into our roots. For that, one needs to make a conscious effort to visualize and accept the origins of mankind and the very sacrosanct nature of those origins. This takes effort and discourse.

TLT: If you were to describe your book “Antim: The Last Avatar” in a few words without giving any spoilers, what would those words be?

Neetika Modi: Antim- The Last Avatar- This is a testament to the soul of humankind. It is a journey that challenges perceptions and ignites the flames of curiosity, makes one peel back the veils of the familiar, and ventures into the realms of the extraordinary.

TLT: What advice would you give to budding writers who may be planning to write in the same genre as “Antim: The Last Avatar”?”

Neetika Modi: Discipline, Dedication and Discretion.

TLT: Thank you very much for sparing your time. I look forward to reading more books from you in the future. All the best.

Neetika Modi: Thank you so much.



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